



PRAIRIE CONSERVATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE

The Prairie Conservation Coordinating Committee
Annual Report
1989-1990

CANADIANA

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PRAIRIE CONSERVATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT	1
THE PRAIRIE CONSERVATION ACTION PLAN (PCAP)	
• A Synopsis	2
THE PRAIRIE CONSERVATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE (PCCC)	
• Establishment	3
• Role	3
• Operating Principles	3
• Membership	4
• Summary of Meetings and Activities.....	6
APPENDIX	
• Terms of Reference	8
• Member Agencies.....	10



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Chairman's Report

This first annual report reviews the progress made by the Prairie Conservation Coordinating Committee (PCCC) toward conserving the biological diversity of Alberta's native prairie and parkland ecosystems. The significance of this project is evident in the fact that the PCCC is the largest multi-party environmental committee of its kind ever to be established in our province.

Initially, the PCCC focused on various administrative and operational issues, but it quickly moved on to substantive items such as strategies for implementation and communications, both of which are nearing completion. In essence, this first year has been one of building a solid foundation and framework in which to work toward achieving the goals of the Prairie Conservation Action Plan (PCAP).

The success of any cooperative effort is determined largely by the commitment of the individuals involved. As chairman, I have been fortunate to work with just such a group of dedicated committee members. In addition,

the efforts of various individuals and groups in organizing, hosting and planning the logistics for specific committee meetings was greatly appreciated by myself and all committee members.



Finally, a special note of thanks and appreciation is due to the committee's secretary, Ian Dyson, for his very dedicated and tireless work in all aspects of the PCCC's operations.

The coordinating committee has made a solid beginning in addressing the challenges outlined in the PCAP. Over the next year another step will be taken, changing the focus from development of strategies, to implementation and action-oriented activities. I encourage all interested individuals and organizations to support this committee in meeting the challenges that lie ahead.

Andy Masiuk
Chairman, 1989-1990

A Synopsis

The Prairie Conservation Action Plan (PCAP) was one of the products of a three-year World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Canada program. The slogan for the "Wild West" program was: "Let's leave some wild in the west." WWF Canada projects provided Albertans with funding for over two dozen research projects. A new "Prairie for Tomorrow" program was also established, in cooperation with Alberta Fish and Wildlife, to enhance management of endangered species.

The major accomplishment of the Wild West program was the production of the PCAP, a five-year action plan blueprint aimed at prairie-wide efforts to conserve, protect and manage native prairie and parkland species, communities and habitats. The PCAP was produced by a steering committee of westerners, comprising representatives from government and non-government organizations in each of the prairie provinces.

The PCAP lists 10 goals and makes numerous recommendations for specific action. The goals are:

1. Identify the remaining native prairie and parkland;
2. Protect at least one large, representative area in each of the four major prairie ecosystems (Mixed Prairie, Tall Grass Prairie, Fescue Prairie and Aspen Parkland);



3. Establish a system of protected native prairie ecosystems across the three prairie provinces and, where possible, create connecting corridors. This system should include representative samples of each habitat subregion;

4. Protect threatened ecosystems and habitats by preparing and implementing habitat management and restoration plans;

5. Protect and enhance the populations of prairie species designated nationally or provincially as vulnerable, threatened or endangered by implementing recovery and management plans;

6. Ensure that no additional species become threatened, endangered or extirpated;

7. Encourage governments to incorporate conservation of native prairie more explicitly in their programs;

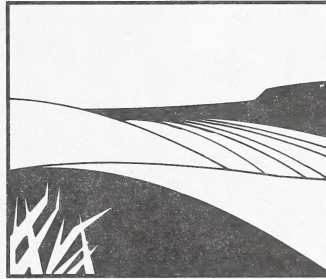
8. Encourage balanced use of private lands that allows sustained use of the land while maintaining and enhancing the native biological diversity of the prairies;

9. Promote public awareness of the values and importance of prairie wildlife and wild places; and

10. Promote research relevant to prairie conservation.

Establishment

The Prairie Conservation Coordinating Committee (PCCC) was created by the Government of Alberta in order to demonstrate support for the goals and intentions of the PCAP. The intent to establish the committee was announced by the Honourable LeRoy Fjordbotten, Minister of Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife in December 1988. The occasion was a joint news conference held with World Wildlife Fund Canada to release the PCAP.



Role

The PCCC was established specifically to ensure the goals and intentions of the PCAP are carried out. The committee is a forum where diverse groups, whose interests, jurisdictions or activities affect the biological diversity of Alberta's native prairie and parkland ecosystems, can exchange information and work cooperatively. (Specific functions are detailed in the Terms of Reference. See Appendix, page 8).

Operating Principles

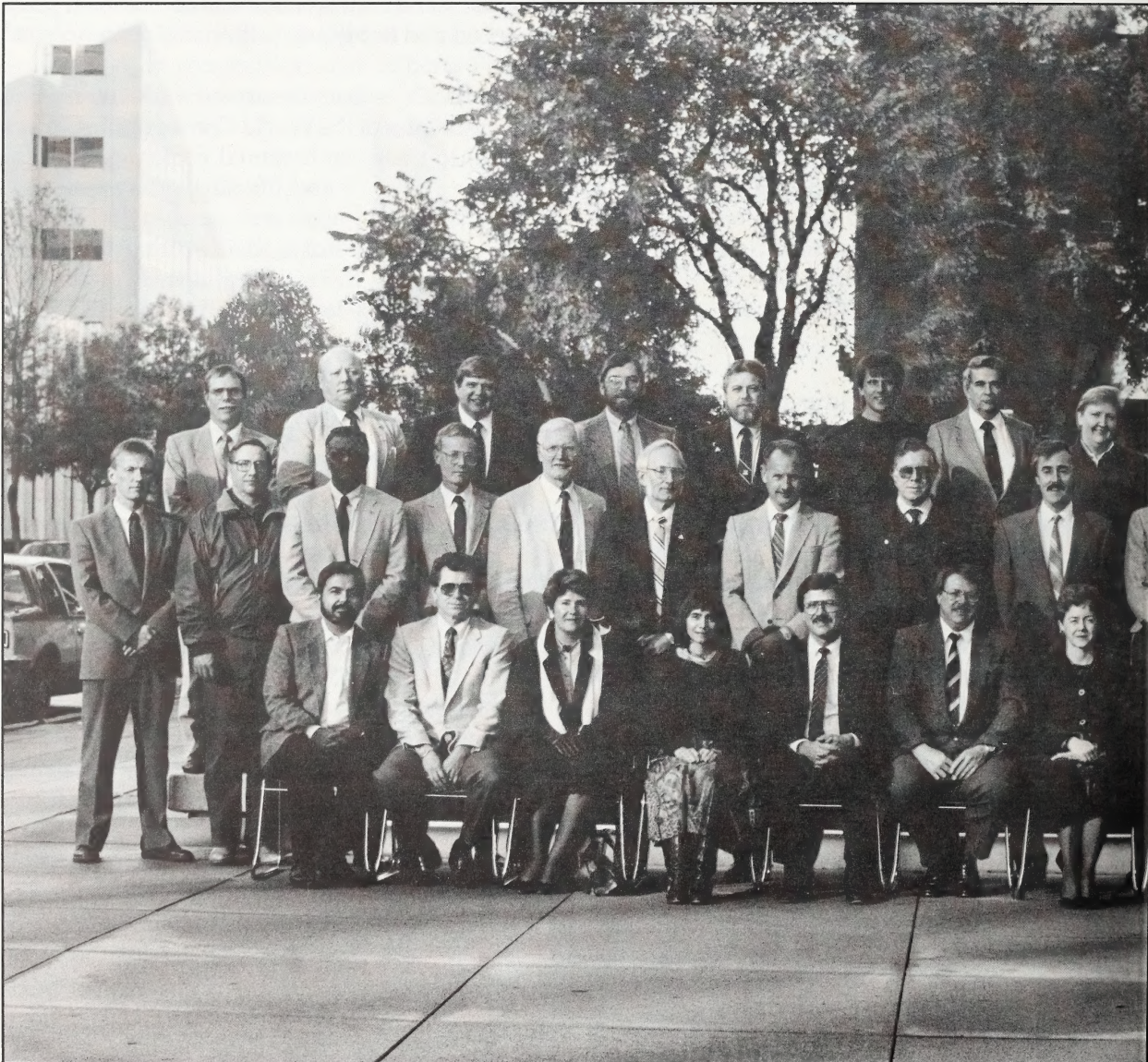
The PCCC has adopted six operating principles.

1. PCCC recognizes that the goal of prairie and parkland conservation has both habitat protection and habitat development components.
2. PCCC subscribes to the three international principles of the World Conservation Strategy: (a) to maintain essential ecological processes and life support systems (b) to preserve genetic diversity and (c) to ensure the sustainable utilization of species and ecosystems.
3. PCCC members recognize and respect the legitimacy of different values and viewpoints.
4. The PCCC will focus its energies in areas where there is the greatest amount of potential agreement, and where the most progress can be made toward realizing the goals of the PCAP.
5. The PCCC will attempt to work with all stakeholders and will encourage cooperative, not confrontational approaches. The PCCC will pursue its objectives in a way that respects the livelihood and lifestyles of rural residents.
6. The PCCC subscribes to the principles of integrated resource management.

Membership

PCCC membership is determined by the committee itself. It is the committee's philosophy to seek a broad representation of interests and perspectives from key organizations that can make a contribution to the conservation objectives of the PCAP. The

result is an extremely large membership, comprising representatives from non-government organizations, all three levels of government, environmental and agricultural interest groups, industry and academia.





Front row, left to right:

Roger Creasey,
Energy Resources Conservation Board
Roger Marvin, Public Lands
Lynda Paterson,
Oldman Regional Planning Commission
Shirley Nelson, Land Information Services Division
Andy Masiuk, Chairman, Coordination Services
Ian Dyson, Secretary, Regional Coordination Services
Louise McGillivray, Alberta Tourism
Joyce Gould, World Wildlife Fund Canada
Kathy Beatson,
Calgary Regional Planning Commission
Ann Roberts, Alberta Wilderness Association

Second row, left to right:

Douglas Olson, University of Calgary
Larry Frith, Waterton Biosphere Association
Moe Mahendran, Canadian National Railway
Bob Riddett,
Battle River Regional Planning Commission
Richard White,
Red Deer Regional Planning Commission
Archie Landals, Environment Council of Alberta
Duane Radford, Fish and Wildlife Division
Gordon Edwards, Canadian Wildlife Service
Peter Dickson,
Edmonton Metropolitan Regional Planning
Commission
Stephen Dobson, Alberta Environment
Les Usher, Agriculture Canada
Gerald McKeating, Canadian Wildlife Service
Norman Stanger,
Alberta Association of M.D.s and Counties
Rae Runge, Alberta Municipal Affairs

Back row, left to right:

Jim Struthers, Fish and Wildlife Division
John Rebus, Unifarm
Dr. Niels Damgaard,
Alberta Fish and Game Association
Bill Dolan, Canadian Parks Service
Gary Stewart, Ducks Unlimited
Jay Wieliczko, Federation of Alberta Naturalists
Donn Cline, Alberta Recreation and Parks
Linda Hendrickson,
Palliser Regional Planning Commission
Rhonda Wehrhahn, Alberta Agriculture
Diana Purdy, Alberta Energy
Jay Slempe, Special Areas Board
Jack Summer, Special Areas Advisory Council
Wayne Heller, Alberta Cattle Commission

Summary of Meetings and Activities

Although the PCCC is an extremely large committee, it had a very busy and productive first year, holding four combined meetings/field trips. A summary of each follows.

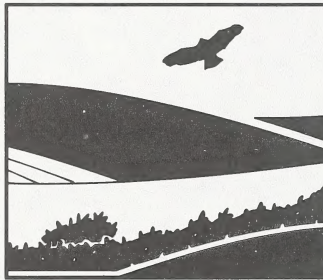
Meeting #1

Drumheller, November 1989

At the inaugural meeting, members exchanged information about their organizations, viewed a slide presentation on prairie and parkland ecosystems, reviewed, revised and adopted a terms of reference, established two subcommittees, and agreed to work toward developing an Alberta implementation strategy for the PCAP.

An illustrated tour of prairie and parkland Alberta, from a field naturalist's perspective, was provided by Cleve Wershler, a photographer and consultant from Calgary.

A field tour of the Hand Hills Ecological Reserve was conducted by the Special Areas Board and Alberta Recreation and Parks. Members entered the reserve at a couple of sites, met with the grazing lessee and discussed a wide range of management issues pertaining to the Ecological Reserves program in general, and the site management plan under development for the Hand Hills site in particular.



Meeting #2

Medicine Hat, March 1990

The level of high profile and political support that exists for prairie and parkland conservation initiatives was demonstrated as members were addressed by the following:

- Monte Hummel, President of World Wildlife Fund Canada
- Jim Horsman, Deputy Premier, Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, Government House Leader and MLA for Medicine Hat
- LeRoy Fjorbotten, Minister of Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife
- Ted Grimm, Mayor of Medicine Hat.

A detailed presentation was given on the North American Waterfowl Management Plan.

In the evening, Tom Willock, Director of the Medicine Hat Museum and Art Gallery, gave an illustrated talk on the aesthetics of prairie valleys, focusing on landscape and ecological changes that occurred historically.

In the business portion of the meeting, members reviewed an outline of the public communications strategy, discussed the process of developing an implementation strategy, and adopted six principles to define the manner in which the committee will discharge its mandate.

The Federation of Alberta Naturalists conducted a field tour of riparian woodland habitats in the South Saskatchewan River valley. Two sites were visited: a riverside park in the town of Redcliff that is currently being upgraded and where young cottonwoods are regenerating, and Police Point Park in Medicine Hat.

Summary of Meetings and Activities

Meeting #3

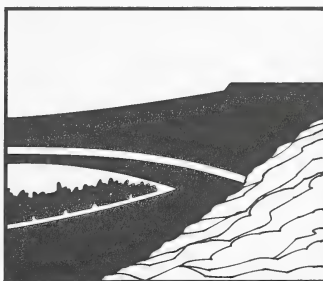
Brooks, July 1990

A report was given that detailed the progress made in inventorying native ecosystems. Members also spent some time discussing the values and viewpoints of different organizations. An implementation strategy for the PCAP was adopted and five workgroups were formed to work in detail on specific recommendations for action.

The Alberta Water Resources Commission outlined the draft wetlands policy for the settled areas of Alberta.

The evening speaker was Dr. Geoffrey Holroyd, a research scientist with the Canadian Wildlife Service, who gave an illustrated talk on his current research into the habitat and feeding requirements of the prairie falcon in the Eastern Irrigation District (EID). The EID's board and staff conducted a field tour to observe sites with:

- tourism development potential (east side of Lake Newell);
- habitat development and range management (Kitsim Reservoir);
- an irrigation conveyance (Bow Slope Canal);
- access concerns (south of Lake Newell);
- random recreation use (Rolling Hills Reservoir);
- habitat protection and interpretation (Sven Bayer peninsula);
- cooperative wetland habitat development (North and South Kinbrook Marsh Developments); and
- group use facilities (Kinbrook Island Provincial Park).



Meeting #4

Edmonton, October 1990

A draft communications strategy was reviewed and a subcommittee formed to select a logo, follow up on short-term strategies and report back to the PCCC with recommendations for addressing longer-term strategies.

Reports were tabled by the five workgroups that are focusing on follow-up to specific PCAP recommendations. One report was adopted; reports from the other workgroups were still in progress.

Focusing on the theme of desirability and value of protected reserves in pursuing conservation objectives, members split into workshop groups to address aspects of this issue. Facilitators presented verbal reports to the plenary

session.

Gerald McKeating was elected chairman for 1991. An annual report for 1990 and a workplan for 1991 were reviewed and adopted.

Two field trips were conducted. A volunteer steward conducted a field tour of the Wagner Bog Natural Area. Issues associated with the site were discussed in detail.

TransAlta Utilities conducted and hosted a tour of reclamation operations at the Keephills, Sundance and Wabamun coal mines. Reclamation techniques and activities were reviewed, with a focus on soil replacement and productivity, and bioengineering techniques.

Terms of Reference

Authority

Initiated by the Government of Alberta. The committee is consultative and advisory to member organizations. It does not have legislative, management or program authority or responsibilities. The acceptance of committee recommendations will remain at the individual discretion of member organizations.

Duration

The committee's duration is tied to the Prairie Conservation Action Plan, 1989-1994. The committee will exist until December 31, 1994. This tenure may be extended at the discretion of the committee.

Purpose

1. The purpose of the committee is to encourage effective implementation of the Prairie Conservation Action Plan in Alberta and to provide an ongoing profile for prairie and parkland conservation initiatives.

2. The committee will establish a focus and profile for the cooperative pursuit of initiatives identified in the Prairie Conservation Action Plan. It will:

- serve as a forum for information exchange and cooperation between key organizations with interests in or jurisdiction over prairie conservation initiatives;
- allow key contacts to get together periodically to review the plans, projects and programs of member organizations, to assess progress and to integrate program efforts;
- constitute a cooperative partnership between different levels of government and non-government organizations in sharing major responsibility for implementing the Prairie Conservation Action Plan, while also allowing

both groups to share their experiences and strengthen mutual goals and objectives;

- encourage members to tailor their own programs, policies or initiatives to meet the goals of the Prairie Conservation Action Plan;
- review progress in implementing the Prairie Conservation Action Plan in Alberta;
- identify gaps and recommend measures to fill them in such areas as inventory deficiencies or new program requirements; and
- adopt media communication strategies as appropriate to ensure that significant initiatives and accomplishments are widely communicated publicly.

3. The committee will encourage coordination and complementarity between major conservation-related initiatives such as the Prairie Conservation Action Plan, the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, the Alberta Conservation Strategy, and Federal/Provincial Soil Conservation initiatives.

Meeting Schedule

The committee shall meet a minimum of once a year. Additional meetings may occur as scheduled by the committee.

Method of Financing and Support Services

No financing is required. Each member organization will fund the activities of its member representatives. Support and secretarial services to the committee will be provided through Regional Coordination Services, Central and Southern regions of Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife.

Terms of Reference

Membership

1. To be assigned by each member organization.

2. Provincial government agencies:

Director-level representatives, to be named by deputy ministers, from Agriculture•Culture and Multiculturalism•Energy (Mineral Resources Division)•Environment•Forestry, Lands and Wildlife (Public Lands, Fish and Wildlife, Land Information Services divisions)•Municipal Affairs (Planning Services, Special Areas)•Recreation•Tourism.

3. Invitations to nominate members will be extended to the following agencies and organizations:

Other Jurisdictions

Agriculture Canada•Environment Canada (Canadian Wildlife Service, Waterton Lakes National Park)•Department of National Defence•Environment Council of Alberta•Energy Resources Conservation Board•Battle River, Calgary, Edmonton Metropolitan, Oldman, Palliser, Red Deer, South East, South Peace and Mackenzie regional planning commissions•Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties•Special Areas Advisory Board•Eastern Irrigation District

Non-government Organizations

Alberta Wilderness Association•Alberta Fish and Game Association•Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society•Ducks Unlimited•Federation of Alberta Naturalists•Nature Conservancy of Canada•Waterton Biosphere Association•Wildlife Habitat Canada•World Wildlife Fund Canada

Agriculture and Industry

Alberta Cattle Commission•Western Stockgrowers•Unifarm•Canadian Petroleum Association/Independent Petroleum

Association of Canada•Coal Association•TransAlta Utilities

Academia

Faculty of Environment Design, University of Calgary

Native People

Indian Association of Alberta (treaty Indian representative)

4. Other organizations may be invited to nominate members or attend meetings as guests at the discretion of the committee.

Records of Observation

Minutes will be kept of all committee meetings and distributed to the committee members.

Citizen Participation

There will be no citizen or public participation at committee meetings. The committee may invite presentations by members of the public or any non-member public group or organization on subjects of interest to the committee.

Procedures

•The committee will review the chairmanship of the committee on an annual basis. Initially, the Director of Coordination Services, Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife, will act as chairman.

•The committee will establish, on an as required basis, subcommittees or task groups to assist with committee business.

•At the request of the committee, Regional Coordination Services, Central and Southern regions, Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife will be responsible for preparing guidelines for formal committee operations and any reports on committee activities (e.g. annual report, workplan).

Appendix

Member Agencies

Dr. Bernie Sonntag
Mel Miller
Norman Stanger
Wayne Heller
Philip H.R. Stepney
Diana Purdy
Stephen Dobson
Dr. Niels Damgaard
Rae Runge
Donn Cline
Louise McGillivray
Ann Roberts

Bob Riddett

John Rusling
Major H. Brent McDonald
Moe Mahendran
Miles Scott-Brown
Charlie Zinkan
Gerald McKeating
Bernd Martens

Gary Stewart

Bill Mortensen
Peter Dickson
Cynthia Langlo
Archie Landals

Rob Gardner
Duane Radford
Jim Struthers

Basil Delaney

Larry Simpson

Lynda Paterson

Linda Hendrickson
Roger T. Marvin

Bill Shaw
Ian W. Dyson
Andy Masiuk

Jim Muller
Jay Slemp
Gerald Kornelson

Phil Lulman

John Rebus
J. Douglas Olson

Larry Frith
Ed Curry
David J. Neave
Joyce Gould

Agriculture Canada
Alberta Agriculture
Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties
Alberta Cattle Commission
Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism
Alberta Energy
Alberta Environment
Alberta Fish and Game Association
Alberta Municipal Affairs
Alberta Recreation and Parks
Alberta Tourism
Alberta Wilderness Association

Battle River Regional Planning Commission

Calgary Regional Planning Commission
Canadian Forces Base Suffield
Canadian National Rail
Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society
Canadian Parks Service
Canadian Wildlife Services
Coal Association

Ducks Unlimited

Eastern Irrigation District
Edmonton Metropolitan Regional Planning Commission
Energy Resources Conservation Board
Environment Council of Alberta

Federation of Alberta Naturalists
Fish and Wildlife Division, Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife
Fish and Wildlife Division, Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife

Land Information Services Division, Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife

Nature Conservancy of Canada

Oldman River Regional Planning Commission

Palliser Regional Planning Commission
Public Lands Division, Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife

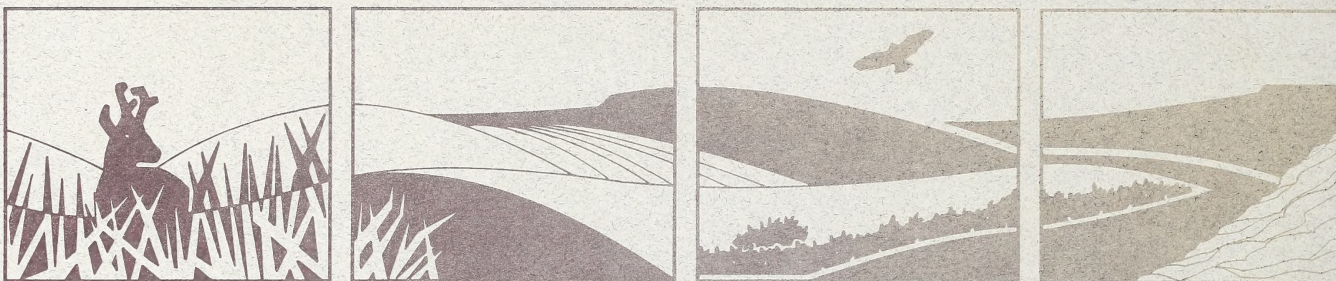
Red Deer Regional Planning Commission
(Secretary) Regional Coordination Services, Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife
(Chairman, 1989-90) Coordination Services, Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife

South East Regional Planning Commission
Special Areas Board
Special Areas Advisory Council

TransAlta Utilities

Unifarm
University of Calgary

Waterton Biosphere Association
Western Stockgrowers Association
Wildlife Habitat Canada
World Wildlife Fund Canada



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